**Examiner comments essay example 4**

**Grade awarded: C**

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| Criterion A | 5 |
| Criterion B | 4 |
| Criterion C | 4 |
| Criterion D | 5 |
| Total | 18 |

This is a reasonable essay that attempts to anchor ways of knowing to areas of knowledge and is partly successful in doing so. The student, clearly writing in a second language, has a clear thesis and the structure of the essay is easy to follow. Overall the essay lacks depth and detail, and has a superficial account of many areas (for example, lines 36–46, lines 88–89).

**Criterion A: Understanding knowledge issues**

**Mark awarded: 5**

By examining the roles of the four ways of knowing in the six areas of knowledge in turn, the essay is consistently relevant. There are some effective links between areas of knowledge and ways of knowing (for example, lines 13–15, lines 17–19, lines 84–85) but some are tenuous or undeveloped (for example, lines 28–29, lines 67–70). As a result, there is some understanding, but not a good understanding, of knowledge issues.

**Criterion B: Knower’s perspective**

**Mark awarded: 4**

By attempting to cover all areas of knowledge and ways of knowing, the essay feels rather mechanistic and lacks an original, personal thread. This approach means, in addition, that there is little space in any given part of the essay for the student to demonstrate independent thinking or personal engagement. Some evidence for the latter can be seen in the choice of examples (for example, lines 15–16, lines 32–35, line 43, “partisans of the caliph Ali”, and lines 88–90), though these are only partially explored, and the reader is left with too much work to do to fully understand the points they are supposed to make. The latter two of these examples provide some evidence of awareness of different perspectives, though this aspect is not explored.

**Criterion C: Quality of analysis of knowledge issues**

**Mark awarded: 4**

The analysis is limited by the extremely broad scope of the essay, and often the conclusions drawn in the various areas are not adequately supported by previous consideration (for example, lines 21–22, lines 75–77, lines 92–93). So, while there is some coherent argument and justification, the essay only partly explores and partly describes knowledge issues.

Counterclaims are briefly mentioned at points (for example, lines 83–85) but not in detail and the examples are not used as a vehicle for analysis. The 0^0 example (lines 88–90), a potentially fruitful one, is undeveloped; and the example in lines 77–81 is very weak. One might equally argue that reason would say he should be kept alive and emotion would tell us to turn off the machine (for example, to end the drawn out agony of the family). Hypothetical examples such as these are generally not helpful and should be avoided.

The lack of analysis of the central term “truth” is problematic. Had the concept been taken as monolithic and transparent then analysis could have focused on the ways of knowing; however, the claim that “The concept of truth … differs for different areas of knowledge” (line 92) and the inconsistent use of speech marks (“truth” or truth) required attention and elaboration which was not forthcoming.

**Criterion D: Organization of ideas**

**Mark awarded: 5**

In terms of the conceptual clarity strand of this criterion, the essay structure is clear and satisfactory, with a reasonably clear introduction and conclusion. Concepts are for the most part used clearly, though they are not developed or refined. In particular, the concept of “truth”, though discussed, is not developed, despite constant attention. Local difficulties (for example, line 26, lines 67–69), do not undermine the general clarity.

In terms of the referencing strand of this criterion, references are needed at some points, but the essay does not hinge on them and so no major penalty is appropriate (line 32, “For instance, during an experiment…”, and line 43, “partisans of the Caliph Ali”). Nevertheless, the omission is bad practice and might have pulled down the overall mark for this criterion, had the other strand of this criterion suggested better.